



Comparative Literature Program Graduate Program Overview

Our graduate program in Comparative Literature allows students to pursue advanced study of literature within and beyond national and linguistic borders; develop knowledge of literary theory and interdisciplinary methodologies, and achieve proficiency in two foreign languages (in addition to their native language). In addition to the doctoral degree in Comparative Literature (CLIT), we also offer graduate training in Comparative Literature with a German literary studies specialization (CLG) and with a French and Francophone studies specialization (CLF). Our students are also encouraged to complete optional graduate emphases in East Asian Studies, Feminist Studies, Global Studies, and/or Translation Studies.

The Ph.D. in Comparative Literature requires advanced study of three fields consisting of either (a) three national or language-based literatures, or, (b) two national or language-based literatures and one related discipline, such as critical theory, film studies, media studies, philosophy, history, art history, religious studies, cultural sociology or cultural anthropology. One of the literatures may be English. The other(s) must be studied in the original language. Two of these fields are considered major; the third, minor. In the French or German specialization, two of the three fields pertain to the literary traditions relevant to each language-based specialization.

Through rigorous training in language, literary research, methodologies and pedagogy, the doctoral program in Comparative Literature thus prepares students to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to function as teachers and scholars of national language departments as well as comparatists in comparative, world literature, and English departments.

Coursework & Degree Milestones

Our program has no terminal M.A. program. All students admitted into the M.A. program are conditionally admitted into the Ph.D. program as well. Continuation beyond the M.A. degree, however, is by invitation only, based on the academic record. Students define a plan of study as soon as they enter the program, and revise it in consultation with the Director of Graduate Study as they advance through the program.

Students in all three programs (CLIT, CLG, CLF), who are entering without an M.A., are expected to complete the M.A. degree in 2 years. The M.A. requires a minimum of 40 units of graduate-level course work in either (a) three national or language-based literatures, or, (b) two national or language-based literatures and one related discipline chosen in consultation with the DGS. The 40 units of graduate-level course work must include the 4 unit Proseminar in Comparative Literature (CLIT210), a minimum of 8 graduate units in each of two national or language-based literatures and 4 graduate units in the student's third national literature or the related discipline. Eight additional graduate units must be taken in Comparative Literature. Students must take and pass their **first field examination** at the end of their second year of study.

Beyond the requirements for the M.A., continuing students are required to complete a minimum of 24 units of coursework for the Ph.D. Among the 64 total units total, a minimum of 12 units of

graduate-level course work must be completed in each of the student's three fields, plus at least 12 additional units of graduate-level course work from the offerings in the Comparative Literature Program, with the remaining 12 units to be distributed among the student's fields in consultation with the DGS. Students are encouraged to take or audit other courses, both within and outside of the department, that match their interests and planned specializations. They must take two seminars for a letter grade until they are advanced to candidacy, except in quarters while they are taking examinations. In order to be A.B.D., they must demonstrate a competence in a second foreign language, pass **two more field examinations**, present and defend a dissertation prospectus. After advancing to candidacy, they write and defend a dissertation. The following table summarizes all course and language requirements for the M.A. and Ph.D.

| Course Requirements (All Courses To Be Taken for Letter Grade) | Units | Level |
|---|------------------|--------------|
| CLIT 210 : Proseminar or equivalent | 4 | M.A./Ph.D. |
| Field 1: Field Name | | |
| 2 courses | 8 | M.A. |
| 1 course | 4 | Ph.D. |
| Field 2: Field Name | | |
| 2 courses | 8 | M.A. |
| Course | 4 | Ph.D. |
| Minor Field: Field Name | | |
| 1 course | 4 | M.A. |
| 2 courses | 8 | Ph.D. |
| Comparative Literature | | |
| 2 courses | 8 | M.A. |
| Course | 4 | Ph.D. |
| Additional Courses (Chosen with DGS) | | |
| 2 courses | 8 | M.A. |
| Course | 4 | Ph.D. |
| Total of units : | <u>64</u> | |
| Language Requirements (2) | | |
| Courses or examination (1 st foreign lang.) | | M.A. |
| Courses or examination (2 nd foreign lang.) | | Ph.D. |

Students entering the program with an M.A. in Comparative Literature or a closely related field also need a minimum of 24 units of graduate-level course work to be distributed in consultation with the DGS. These 24 units must include 4 units in each of two national or language-based literatures, 4 units in the student's third national or language-based literature or related discipline, and 4 units in Comparative literature. A limited number of course exemptions are allowed as specified in the Graduate Student Handbook. Additional course work may be required

to make up for deficiencies, including taking CLIT 210, the proseminar in Comparative Literature. Students entering the program with an M.A. from a different institution must pass **three field examinations** in three national or language-based literatures or two national or language-based literatures and a related field. The first field examination should be taken in the first quarter of their second year at UCSB in a national or language-based literature other than the literature of the student's native language. In order to be advanced to candidacy students must demonstrate competence in a second foreign language, present and defend a dissertation prospectus. After advancement to candidacy they write and defend a dissertation.

| Course Requirements for the doctoral degree beyond the MA (All Courses To Be Taken for Letter Grade) | Units | Level |
|---|------------------|--------------|
| CLIT 210 : Proseminar or equivalent, if not yet taken) | (4) | M.A./Ph.D. |
| Field 1: Field Name | | |
| 1 course | 4 | Ph.D. |
| Field 2: Field Name | | |
| 1 course | 4 | Ph.D. |
| Minor Field: Field Name | | |
| 2 courses | 8 | Ph.D. |
| Comparative Literature | | |
| Course | 4 | Ph.D. |
| Additional Courses (Chosen with DGS) | | |
| Course | 4 | Ph.D. |
| Total of units : | <u>24</u> | |
| Language Requirement | | |
| Courses or examination (2 nd foreign lang.) | | Ph.D. |

NB: All units indicated above do not include dissertation units (CLIT599) or units taken in conjunction with teaching and pedagogical training (such as CLIT591).

Qualifying Examinations & Dissertation

A field is an area of study within a national or language-based literature or within a related discipline. Comparative literature students do not necessarily organize their studies around the canonical history of a national or language-based literature. Rather they define their field according to a period and/or a genre or topic, and then create a reading list that reflects that focus and includes what is necessary to understand that focus in an historical context. It is expected that students familiarize themselves fully with the secondary scholarships relevant to their fields. The point is that each student's fields are both focused and sufficiently broad to reflect a grasp of influences, antecedents, and relevant ancillary disciplines.

Qualifying exams in Comparative Literature consist of three field examinations, based upon a reading list of 50-75 works students develop with their three-member exam committees. The preparation for the exam enables students to gain reasonable mastery of a given field, understood as the competence necessary to publish and teach within this area. The expectation is for literature to be read in its original language. Non-native speakers of English must write their first exam in English. The exam in the major fields consists of a written and an oral component, which both test students' knowledge of influential theories and research within their fields, their methodological skills, and their abilities to craft original and cogent arguments on primary and secondary literature within their fields.

The written examination for the major fields take one of the following two forms determined in consultation with the examining committee and the DGS: 1) one substantial original essay of approximately 50 pages (the idea of which can come from seminar work but the essay should not be merely a longer version of a seminar paper) or a thesis (for the first field exam only); or 2) a two-day written examination based upon three questions (which must all be answered in separate essays). At least one of the two exams in the major field shall be a two-day written examination. The oral, which lasts no longer than 90 minutes, will take place after the written is passed; its primary purpose is to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge within the chosen field. Student must pass both the written and the oral to pass the field exam. For the minor field, only a written exam is required. It may take the form of either: 1) one substantial original essay of approximately 35 pages (the germ of the idea of which can come from seminar work but the essay should not be merely a longer version of a seminar paper); or, 2) two 20-page papers (unrelated to seminar papers). Students can retake each field exam (either or both parts) only once so as to demonstrate their competency.

After they have completed all three field exams, students start working on their **prospectus** (dissertation proposal), which they must successfully defend in an oral defense (the form of which is specified in the Graduate Student Handbook) in front of their anticipated dissertation committee (per UCSB policy, a group of at least 3 ladder-rank faculty, the Chair and another member must affiliated with Comparative Literature). The purpose is to assess a student's preparation to begin writing the dissertation and conducting advanced research on the outlined topic. The prospectus, 10-15 pages in length, includes a clear formulation of the research topic, an outline of the projected contents of each chapter of the dissertation, a discussion of how the proposed work promises to contribute to the field or discipline to which it belongs. It also indicates that the candidate is conversant with the relevant secondary literature and major scholarship and thus includes a discussion of the methodological and theoretical framework within which the topic is to be examined. A working bibliography and a schedule indicate when drafts, chapters and revisions will be submitted.

This whole process leads to **advancement to candidacy**, and must be completed within four years of matriculation in our doctoral program.

The culmination of a student's intellectual training and scholarly growth, the **dissertation** should 1) make a significant scholarly contribution to comparative literature and other related fields; 2) develop in a meaningful manner an argument on a corpus of texts, print or visual media; and 3) demonstrate a student's ability to use various methodologies in a manner that meets rigorous standards of research. Doctoral candidates write their theses in English, and provide full translations of all texts (secondary and primary) that are quoted in languages other than English. They must meet regularly with the Chair of their dissertation committee, for support and guidance, and to ensure that they are pursuing a productive line of inquiry. Researching and writing the doctoral thesis should not take more than 3 years. During their work on the dissertation, students need to keep a record of their research, reading and writing activities. A formal report of progress toward completion of the dissertation is to be submitted at the end of each quarter to the DGS and is signed both by their advisors and DGS (the form is available on our web site). Once a dissertation is complete, and all members of the committee have agreed to a defense, a student must defend his/her work in a 90-min oral defense. Once the student has completed all suggestions for revisions, and has filed the dissertation, he/she has satisfied all requirements for the award of the doctoral degree.

Pedagogical Training

All our graduate students teach at least 3 to 5 years during their time in our program (between 9 and 15 quarters), not only in Comparative Literature, but also in the Writing Program, in language departments, in English, History, Feminist Studies, Black Studies, and so on. In Comparative Literature, whether or not they have had prior teaching experience, they follow a pedagogical workshop offered by experienced Teaching Assistants in the fall, and are supported by Lead Teaching Assistants as well as the main professor teaching the large classes for which they lead discussion sections. Our students also receive excellent pedagogical training in language departments and in the Writing Program, which gives them a real advantage on the job market. Their teaching performance is assessed regularly.

Professional Development

We encourage our students to present their work at local (in the English Department, in the Graduate Center for Literary Research) and national conferences (such as the American Comparative Literature Association), and in international conferences (ICLA, and other conferences). Funding is made available to support their travel to conferences once a year. We also organize meetings with visiting scholars, affiliated faculty, and alumni, to discuss various issues pertaining to professional development, such as publishing, preparing for the job market, and building a strong teaching portfolio. Students are also urged to attend events organized by the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center and the Graduate Division, which focus on graduate professional development. Our students are extremely creative and resourceful; they all volunteer for departmental service (as the students' representative to the Board of Comparative Literature, as members of the CLIT colloquia committee, as Lead Teaching Assistants, as Editors of the

CLIT Newsletter, and so on). In addition, they have created remarkable curricular initiatives, such as the Undergraduate Conference and a mentoring program for undergraduates. Finally, our students play a leading role in Graduate Student Recruitment and in the new Graduate Center for Literary Research.

Timeline for Completion

A) For those earning the M.A./Ph.D. at UCSB

Year 1: Course work

Year 2: First Field Exam and 40 units of course work should be completed by the end of the second year

Year 3: Course work, second field exam and possibly third field exam

Year 4: ABD should be attained by the end of the 4th year by completing all three field exams and the remaining 24 units of course work and by successfully defending a dissertation prospectus.

Year 5: Possible research abroad. Work on dissertation

Year 6: Work on dissertation

Year 7: Work on dissertation and defense

B) For those entering with the M.A. from another institution

Year 1: Course work

Year 2: First Field Exam in the first quarter of the second year. Course work. Possibly completing second field exam by the end of the year

Year 3: Completion of required 24 units of course work. Second and third field exams completed.

Year 4: ABD should be attained by the end of the fall quarter by successfully presenting a dissertation prospectus. Work on dissertation and/or research abroad.

Year 5: Possible research abroad, work on dissertation

Year 6: Work on dissertation and defense.